

Our ref: NP.18.07.03

9 July 2018

Joining forces to keep our young people safe



Dear Parents/Carer

Re: Hampshire Safe

You will be aware from my previous letter that we have engaged in a New Forest programme called Hampshire Safe along with other secondary schools and sixth form colleges, designed to educate our students about the risks related to the use of drugs. As part of this process we have committed to inviting detection dogs into school periodically to support our commitment to ensuring the school is a drugs free site.

Students and staff have already been informed that this will be happening although the precise date of the search will not be publicised. Senior school staff will accompany the dogs and their handlers at all times of the day. The dogs are highly trained to indicate discreetly if a scent is identified and then information will be passed to the senior member of staff present who will manage the situation in a sensitive way. Students with a fear of dogs or allergies will not need to go near the dogs and should not be concerned. Indeed no student will come into physical contact with a dog. We have also discussed this process with our Police Liaison Officer and have their full support. The School's Drugs Policy has recently been amended to reflect these changes and safeguards. If you have any questions about these arrangements which are designed to support students and keep the school community safe, please do not hesitate to contact me.

- All students have been informed via assemblies that a search will take place at some point during the year but no precise date or time will be given.
- All staff have been informed via briefing that a search will take place at some point during the year but no precise date or time will be given.
- The Police Liaison Officer has been contacted to request a police presence in the event of illicit substances being identified. We hope they will not be needed.
- The Police Liaison Officer will be asked to be in the room where bags might be searched and he/she will be accompanied by a member of the senior team.
- If a student is identified by the dog it does not necessarily mean they have done anything wrong. It is possible for clothes or possessions to be contaminated or to hold similar smells and for there to be an innocent explanation. This will be emphasised to students.

I appreciate your ongoing support for this initiative and would like to thank those of you who have taken the time to express your support of this stance on keeping children safe in New Forest schools and colleges.

Yours sincerely

N Pressnell
Headteacher